THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN CHINA.

A Chino-Jewish Family.

THE HISTORY

of the

JEWS IN CHINA

I. The Jews in China. General View.

II. The Jewish Memorial Stones and their Lesson.

BY

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"הִנֵּה אֵלֶּה מֵרָחוֹק יָבֹאוּ

וְהִנֵּה אֵלֶּה מִצָּפוֹן וּמִיָּם

וְאֵלֶּה מֵאֶרֶץ סִינִים"

(ישעיה מ"ט י"ב)

"Behold these shall come from far;
and these from the north and from
the west;
And these from the Land of Sinim"

(*Isaiah 49. 12*)

STADT-BIBLIOTHEK
FRANKFURT am MAIN

To

DR. GEORGE PERLMANN

DEDICATED

WITH PATERNAL LOVE

BY

THE AUTHOR.

London, October 1st, 1912.

I.

GENERAL VIEW.

The History of the Jews in China.

GENERAL VIEW.

IT is a well-known fact that there have been Jews settled in China since time immemorial, but regarding the actual date of their immigration, which way they took, and what trick of fortune had led them thither, we lack all accurate historical information, and all theories made about it must be taken as being only conjectural. Curiously enough no Jewish writer had occupied himself until recently with the Chinese Jews, not even Benjamin of Tudela, although he mentions China in his works, and notwithstanding that he wrote very much about the Jews living scattered all over the world.

The first reliable records of Jews in China we find with the Tartar travellers of the ninth and fourteenth centuries.[1]) Ibn-Batuta reports that many Jews have perished through massacres in

1) See "Ancient accounts of India and China, by two Mohammedan Travellers, translated from the Arabic by Eusebius Renandot," London, 1733

Kanfu (now Kanpin) [1]); John of Monto Corrina and Marignolli mention Jews living at Cambulac (now Peking); Marco Polo first mentions Jews in connection with the war between Kublai-Khan and his relative Nayan. The Hieromonach Alexei Winogradoff in his Istoria Biblii na Wostoke, St. Petersburg, 1895, says, "It is very likely that Jews as travellers frequented China at the time of the Kings of Israel". He points to the fact that among the folklore of the Jews in China there is a popular poem referring to the presents sent by Hyram to David (2 Sam. V. 11) as coming from an Emperor of China. But we must not overlook the oldest record which we find in the second Isaiah, who, to conclude from his prophecy on Cyrus (Chap. XLV), was a contemporary of Cyrus the Great i. e. about 530 B. C. Isaiah prophesies in chapter XLIX, 12: "These shall come from far, and these from the north and from the west and these from the land of Sinim," whereby no doubt China (Sina) is meant, as Manasseh-ben-Israel translates it.[2])

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1) See "The Travels of Ibn-Batuta, from the Arabic by Rev. Dr. Lee", London, 1829.

2) See מקוה ישראל, פרק ו' אות כ"ד where we find the following paragraph: „ולפי דעתו דבר הנביא ישעיה מזה (מ"ט י"ב) הנה אלה מרחוק יבאו ואלה מצפון ומים ואלה מארץ סינים, וגם בטלמיוס בס' ז' פ"ג קורא מדינת כינא, „רעגיום סינארום" וזהו האמת ולא כמו שפירש ראב"ע סינים לשון סנה והוא מארץ מצרים כי הוא טעות גמור."

And despite the Septuagint's translation by "Persia" and despite the translation of the Vulgate by "the Land of the South," which is followed by Targum Jonathan, Raschi and Redak, we can take the prophecy of Isaiah as a proof that Jews were already settled in China prior to the erection of the second Temple by Zorobabel, and the re-establishment of the Jewish commonwealth by Ezra.

According to early records the Jewish population in China was estimated to amount to several thousands of souls, and James Finn (The Jews in China, London 1843) considers them as immigrants from Chaldea because of their being in possession of fragments of the Prophets Zechariah and Malachi, and their knowing several Talmudic rites. The Jews themselves, as far as their traditions go, asseverate that their ancestors immigrated into China at the time of the Han Dynasty, i. e. towards the end of the reign of Ming-ti of the East-Han Dynasty, which lasted from 25 till 221 C.E. This Emperor reigned from 58 to 75 C.E. and is renowned for having introduced Buddhism into China.

In the annals of the Mongolian Dynasty for the years 1329 and 1354, at the time when the Mongolian power began to dwindle away, Jews are mentioned as having been summoned to come to Peking to assist the imperial army, and in both

documents they are named Dju-Hudu (Yehudim). Most certainly they were then numerous and of great influence, and their assistance with men and means was considered by the Government as a support to be reckoned with, since they were summoned along with the Mohammedans, who numbered many millions of souls even as far back as the 14th century. It is regrettable that the annals omit to say where the Jews were living then. What we historically know is, that during the last three centuries they lived at Kaifung the chief town of the Honan Province, where, seemingly they were to be found already prior to that time.

While the Jews were still forming communities and congregations of their own, they were known as "Tiao—kin—Kiao" which means "The Sect who extract the Sinew which shrank" (Genesis 32 33). De Guignes says, they were named also "Lan-mao-hwui-tze" meaning "Mohammedans with blue caps" because of the blue caps they used to wear in the Synagogues when praying. But probably it was only a local denomination for discriminating the Jews from the Mohammedans, as nowhere do we find it mentioned by other travellers, nor did the Jews I spoke to, know anything about it. The Jews I interviewed, only knew themselves to be descendants of the "Sect who extract the Sinew".

In the year 1704 a copious description of the

Jews at Kaifung was issued by the Jesuit Gozani, who names them also "the sect who extract the sinew" (Tiao-kin-Kiao). He adds quotations to prove that the "Tsing-chin-tze" which means "the pure and true temple", consisted of a complex of four courts and some adjoining houses destined for praying, working and dwelling. The "Li-pai-tze" i.e. the Synagogue (from the name "Li-pai" (week) it is to be concluded that they assembled there for prayer only once a week, presumably on Saturdays), measured 60 by 40 feet, having as an entrance an adorned portico of a double row of four columns. In the centre of the hall between rows of pillars there was erected a high chair covered with embroidered cushions, on which the Jews used to put the Thora scroll when reading in it before the assembled congregation. They called it "the chair of Moses". Above the chair of Moses an embroidered canopy was suspended as a token of honour, and attached to it was a tablet bearing on it the name of the Emperor in gilded letters. Beyond this tablet there was written in Hebrew

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד.
ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד.

On a gate near-by there was written also in Hebrew

ב"כ"י"כ יהוה אלהי האלהים ואדוני
האל הגדול הגבור והנורא.

The meaning of the initials ב"כ"י"כ are quite

enigmatical, and many a student has tried in vain to dissolve it satisfactorily. Tichsen considers it to mean כי אם כך ברוך ה' but that would be without a meaning here. Bratier supposes, that as the letters were to a certain degree effaced by age it would be better to put the words בין ב"ה instead of בב"יכ, but in this version also can I see no suitable meaning. My opinion is that only one letter has been slightly effaced and instead of בב"יכ we ought to read בב"ים the initials of ברוך כבוד יהוה ממקומו No doubt another word at the end of the verse has been effaced as well, and it ought to be read ואדני האדנים as the verse in Deut. 10, 17 reads. (See Keglers Beschreibung, Edition Murr, Halle 1806) The Jews showed Gozani their Holy Scriptures; they led him into the Synagogue, even into the "Tien-Tang", i.e. "the House of Heaven" (God), situated on the west side of the temple, the side turned towards Jerusalem. This room, square in outward shape, but rounded within, was reserved for the Rabbi alone, and no other was generally permitted to enter it. Here, upon separate tables, stand twelve Thora-rolls, in honour of the twelve sons of Jacob the patriarchs of the twelve tribes of Israel. Besides these, there was one Thora-roll in the centre in honour of Moses, and each roll was enclosed in a tent of silk stuff. Gozani says that benevolence seems to have been exercised by

the Jewish communities in China, and that they were living in peace and concord. On the north side of the Synagogue-yard, which measured 100 by 50 feet, there was a reserved place where the sinews of the slaughtered cattle were extracted under the supervision of a competent person commissioned for it. There was also an ancestral hall (Tze-tang); in accordance with Chinese customs they worshipped there the manes of the deceased saints or heroes of the Bible. They performed this ceremony twice a year, at the vernal and autumnal equinoxes. There were in the hall only tablets bearing the inscriptions of the names of the heroes, but no images. There were also censers where incense was burnt in honour of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his twelve sons, and of Moses, Joshua and Ezra. I must add, although this custom is hardly compatible with Jewish law, it may be excused when taking into consideration that the censers were presented to them by the Emperor (of the Ming Dynasty, 1368—1644 A.D.) and it was the Emperor himself who gave them the necessary instructions for burning the incense; and after all it was not used for idolatrous purposes. When the Jews entered the Synagogue they put off their shoes, and when reading in the Thora scroll the reader covered his face, immitating Moses (Exod 34.33). No Talith was used by them; they only covered

their heads with blue turbans and threw red shawls over their right shoulder and tied it beneath their left arm. The blue turbans were probably meant to signify a remembrance of "T'kheleth", and to point out a difference between them and the Mohammedans, who wear white turbans when at prayer. At that time they still circumcised their newborn sons, they still observed the laws, and kept holy the feasts of Passover and Sukkoth, and especially the Day of Atonement. The name of "Jahveh" they did not pronounce, substituting for it "Adonai" (like the Jews in the West). They were always strictly monotheistic, and monotheism was their only dogma. But their pure monotheistic creed did not prevent them from believing in the existence of good and evil spirits. They believed also in a hell for the punishment of the wicked, and in a heavenly paradise as a place destined for rewarding the righteous. In praying they turned their faces to the West, the side of Jerusalem. They had also many customs and rites like those of the Western Jews, and the same calendar.

We find in the course of centuries many other references to the Jews in China by travellers and missionaries, although Chinese literati only very seldom and briefly mention Jews in their works. The first Chinese to mention Jews was Sung-tze-an in his work "Tung-king-ke" (written during the

rule of the Shung Dynasty, 420-473 A.D.). He speaks of a house at Kaifung set apart for prayers to the heavenly spirit. The second Chinese man of letters mentioning Jews was Weih-Shuh, who writes about a foreign Temple of Heaven at Chang-ung in Shen-si Province, which it is said was erected in 621 A D.

As it may be concluded from many sources, there were in the 15th century many Jewish congregations in China, including one at Ningpo, one at Hang-chew and one in Peking.

Pater Matteo Ricci, the most learned, most conscientious and most prominent Jesuitic missionary, who arrived in China in the last quarter of the 16th century (1581 C.E. and died at Peking in the year 1610) in his report to the Vatican, gives an account of his first discovering Jews in China. He writes: At the commencement of the 17th century a Chinese came to his house telling him, he called because as he was told that foreigners had arrived in Peking, who worship the Only One God and are not Mohammedans, he was eager to verify whether the rumour was true or not. Pater Ricci says, he recognised the man at once as not being of the Mongolian race. He led him into the Mission House Chapel and in his presence kneeled down before two images, one showing the Madonna with the child Jesus and John the Baptist, and the other showing the four apostles. The Chinese

kneeled down also, and afterwards said "We in China adore our deceased ancestors. One of the images, I am sure, shows Rebecca and her two sons Jacob and Esau, but what is the meaning of the second picture, why does it only show four sons of Jacob when there were twelve? In an intimate conference after this incident, Pater Ricci was told by his guest, that his name was Nagi, and was a Jew who had come from Kaifung to Peking for the great examinations. He further told him that there were twelve Jewish families living in Kaifung who had a nice synagogue and a Thora scroll over four hundred years old. He said, that besides the Jewish community at Kaifung there were many Jewish families at Hang-Chow, the chief town of Chekiang, who had a synagogue as well, and that many Jews were settled all over China. Pater Ricci produced to his visitor a Bible, but he was only able to make out the letters. He confessed that for his neglecting the Hebrew language, giving preference to Chinese he had many a time been rebuked by the Rabbi. Pater Ricci was very interested in all the Jew related to him, and sent out to Kaifung for particular information finding all and everything corroborated. Afterwards more Jews visited him. Pater Ricci then sent, through a converted Chinese, a message to the Rabbi at Kai-fung-fu giving therein explanations

to everything he had said in the conferences he had had with Nagi, chiefly trying to convert the Rabbi by enlightening him in telling him that the, by the Jews eagerly hoped for and expected Messiah, had already appeared in the bodily person of Jesus of Nazareth, who brought salvation not only to the Jews, but to the heathens as well by converting them into Christians. The Rabbi promptly replied that he refused to accept the recognition of the Christian Messiah, saying it was erroneous to believe it as, forsooth, the Messiah has not yet appeared, and would come in the matured time, some ten thousand of years later. But,—continued the Rabbi in his answer to Pater Ricci—as from all the reports which had reached him, he had gained a thorough conviction of Pater Ricci's great and profound knowledge, he—the Rabbi—was willing and ready to cede his rabbinical office to Pater Ricci on the conditions that Pater Ricci should take up his residence in Kaifung-fu among the congregation there, and should promise to abstain furthermore from eating pork,

From this correspondence exchanged between the Rabbi and Pater Ricci, we may quite clearly infer that at that time (in the beginning of the 17th century) the Jews in China had only a faint conception of the Jewish religion and surely were already nearly absorbed by the Chinese. It

undoubtedly proves the Jews to have been thoroughly imbued with Chinese views on abstract religion, as to consider it no obstacle to install a believer in Christ in the post of a Rabbi, if he only abstained from eating pork, taking his believing in Christ as a valueless superstition not worth any attention.

I consider it as important to aver that all records of Pater Ricci ought to be taken as historical documents, as he established his reputation as a staunch truth-loving man of broad views by fearlessly stating in his reports to the Vatican the erroneous means and ways adopted by the other Missionaries in trying to convert the Chinese to Christianity. He, although himself a devout Christian, did not allow his religiousness to mislead him to partiality, he did not hesitate even to mention in his records all the preferences he detected in the religions of China, and for doing so he was prosecuted and denounced by the Dominicans, who accused him of being on the verge of becoming a renegade, and instead of converting the Chinese to Christianity it was to be feared that he would become a proselyte to Buddhism. His behaviour strongly displeased and irritated the Pope, and Pater Ricci was ordered to leave China at once, but the recalling order reached China in the year 1610 when he died.

In the year 1613 Julius Aleni visited the Jews at Kaifung, and in 1642 Samedi recorded that Jews were living in four towns in China and very much esteemed by their neighbours. And that in Nanking he was informed by a Mohammedan, that in that city he knew four families of Jews who had embraced the religion of the Koran, they being the last of their race there, and their instructors having failed as their numbers diminished.

No records reached us afterwards till the Bishop Smith of Shanghai sent out (in 1850) two Chinese converts to Kaifung in order to investigate the condition of the Jews there. But as the Chinese emissaries were ignorant of the Hebrew language, they were only instructed how to copy Hebrew letters, and all they could obtain was, to bring with them some fragments of the Bible and of prayers of an ancient date, written on vellum. The late Marcus Adler in his "Chinese Jews" concludes from the said prayers that the Chinese Jews followed the Maimonides in the same way as do the Jews in Yemen. Dr Neubauer wrote explanations to these prayers in the Jewish Quarterly Review, Vol. VIII, and Mr. Elkan Adler gave supplements to it in the said J.Q.R, Vol. X. Both the late Marcus Adler and Mr. Elkan Adler (in his גנזי פרס ומדי) prove very convincingly that in the last 300 years the Jews of China were in

religious matters under the influence of the Jews of Persia. But nothing can be inferred from it as to the religious influence on them in the earlier centuries.

The great inundation of 1849 swept away the synagogue at Kaifung, and caused also very great loss to the Jewish community, amounting then to some 200 souls. The impoverishment of the congregation, and the destruction of their synagogue was the cause of splitting up the community; they neglected the education of their children, the Hebrew language fell into oblivion, and not even one of them was able to read Hebrew; they then disposed of their houses, and most of them emigrated into the neighbouring provinces.

The critical period for China, the time of the Taiping rebellion (1860—64), gave a moral blow to the Kaifung Jews; they suffered severely by the great inundation in 1860, and were decimated by massacres; they then became thoroughly disorganised in every way. But they still followed some of the time-honoured and sacred commands; they still continued to extract the sinew, they abstained from eating pork and married only in their own tribe. They were very jealous not to be confounded with Mohammedans, and if one tried to take them for such, because the Mohammedans also abstain from pork and do circumcise their sons, the Jews

were anxious to disprove it.

In 1866, Rev. Martin, the President of the Tsung-wan College in Peking, went to Kaifung for investigating personally the condition of the Jews. He writes (A Cycle of Cathay, Chicago 1896): By certain reasons we may presume that some centuries ago many Jewish families were living in China, and it is still remembered that a synagogue at Ningpo which is now ruined, has presented two Thora scrolls to the synagogue of Honan. Rev. Martin could detect nothing of importance. He saw some 6 Jews, members of the 7 families still living there (as he was told). But as Rev. Martin, according to his own report, has committed the blunder of telling them that he had mastered the Hebrew language, and was well versed in the Hebrew Holy Scriptures, but when the Jews brought to him a Thora scroll and found him unable to read in it, he was exposed and ridiculed. It is most probable that the Jews distrusted him and kept reserved. Moreover, it is evident from his report that, in his capacity as a Christian missionary, he tried to preach Christianity to them, aiming to make converts of them. No wonder then that through his agitatory calling which is much suspected, hated and abused all over China, he quite naturally caused the Jews to look askance at him, and to avoid entering into closer

explanations or giving him candid information. Still it is worth noting what Rev. Martin records. He mentions, that two of the Jews were dressed in official attire, one had a golden button, the other a crystal one on their hats (marks of having passed certain examinations required for becoming a candidate for government office). One of them was the son of a Rabbi, who died some 30 years prior to that time, and with whom the last expert of the Hebrew language at Kaifung was buried. The Jews there, still possessed some Thora scrolls as relics only, as nobody was capable of reading in them. The Jews, feeling themselves cut off from their tribe and about to become extinct altogether intended to exhibit a Thora scroll on the market place in order to draw the attention of Jewish travellers, hoping to find assistance from their Western brethren, and to be instructed anew in the holy language.

Rev. Martin found that the Jews did not follow Jewish rites, and did not even circumcise their newborn sons, and were no longer acquainted with the Hebrew tongue. The only remainder of the synagogue was a tablet bearing in gilded letters the inscription "Israel", that was formerly fixed at the entrance of the synagogue; it was afterwards placed in the Mohammedan mosque. Therefore some of the Jews go to the mosque for prayer.

In 1869 Professor Martin wrote to the "Jewish Times" of New York, telling that, the rebuilding of the synagogue is indispensable to give this moribund colony a bond of union, and that without this, nothing can save it from extinction, but the appeal excited some discussion among the Jews, but produced no further result. In 1872 some of them moved from Kaifung to Peking, hoping to find support there, but they became soon aware that their expectations were vain, and returned to their homes. He further records that he met the Jews on the site where the synagogue had formerly stood, and there, in the middle of the place he still found a memorial stone bearing on one side a date corresponding to 1164, and on the other to the date 1488, showing the respective dates of the erection and restoration of the synagogue. (See Part II. The Jewish Memorial Stones and their Lesson.)

Alexei Winogradoff mentions also this memorial stone and says: from some additional characters in the inscription it may be concluded that Jews have been in China even at so early a date as before Moses (!). He mentions also the memorial stone of the same synagogue of the year 1511, on which there is an inscription defining the Jewish religion as strictly monotheistic. The Most High is here called "Tao" and this denomination for

God is often repeated. I take it as a proof that at that time the Jews already commenced to assimilate to the Chinese and named the Only One God by the name "Tao" in accordance with the greatest philosopher of China "Lao-tze" in his immortal book "Tao-teh-king. Surely a purer and higher abstract philosophical conception of God as comprehended by "Lao-tze" in his "Tao-teh-king" is inconceivable, but, although his teaching is purely monotheistic and may suit a mind thoroughly trained in high philosophy, it is too high to be apprehended by the bulk of a nation, nor could it be properly understood by the Jews in China. The Jewish biblical designation "Jahveh" for the One God of Israel and of the whole world, ought not to be translated except in the way we do, always maintaining its connection with the Bible, having, when translating it into other languages always "Jahveh" in mind. But such was not the case when rendered by "Tao" a name taken from a philosopher who never thought, heard or knew of the name "Jahveh". The Jews, by adopting this translation really changed their monotheistic creed, with "Jahveh" as the Only God into another alien creed, with "Tao" as the Only God, and although this creed was also monotheistic, still it was the first step to abandoning their own faith by which they were the chosen people of God,

and becoming absorbed by another faith taught by a greater nation than they were. The English Missionary, Mr. Dennis I. Mills, who has been to Kaifung-fu some 18 years ago, writes in the "China's Millions" for March 1897, that he had the opportunity of conversing with one of their (the Jews') prominent men (?). And—he proceeds—enquiring as to any remaining copies of their Scriptures, he informed us that the only one remaining was in his possession, many having been spoilt by damp. "One", he said, "about eighty years ago, had, during a violent storm been carried by the wind, right into heaven—and from that time" he added, "our religion began to decline".

About seven or eight years ago, members of three or four Jewish families came over from Kaifung to Shanghai, where they were taken care of, and provided by their co-religionists with means for a temporary living, and by degrees some of them were instructed in handicrafts and some were employed as office boys. As none of them had any education, they were unsuited to fill better positions. Simultaneously with the instruction given them in secular subjects, they were also instructed in Hebrew, and in the tenets and rites of the Hebrew law.

When staying at Shanghai I invited some of them to a house of a friend of mine for an

interview. It is still fresh in my memory how amazed were the faces of the Chinese boys in the service of my friend, when they saw that all the ladies and gentlemen who had gathered there for this spectacle, treated these poor Chinese (Jews) as guests, taking a keen interest in them and inviting them to take seats round the same table and to have tea in company with us. The Chinese boys could not overcome their curiosity and asked the Chinese Jews what was the reason for their being so distinguished. The Chinese Jews were proud to tell them that we all, like themselves, were members of one tribe ("Brethren" as the Chinese usually call members of the same tribe), that we were all of the Jewish nation and creed, all descendants of Abraham (or as they spelt it "Ab-lo-hom" because of not being able, like all Chinese, to pronounce the "r" and substituting it by "l").

I was at once convinced that my interview, for which I had been longing for so long, would not be so productive and instructive as I had hoped; it was very apparent that the visitors were of low intellect and lacked education. It was too much to expect these people to understand how deep an interest is taken in the Chinese Jews by their co-religionists, as well as by sociologists in the West. I was disillusioned, but tried to make

the best of it, and to get as much information as possible. They told me, they had come to Shanghai from Kaifung, and that there were still about one thousand Jewish souls living at Kaifung. They name themselves "Tiao-kin-kiao" i.e. "the sect who extract the sinew" and know no other name. To my question, whether they are aware that Jews in other Chinese provinces were denominated as "Lan-mao-hwui-tze" i.e. "Mohammedans with blue turbans", they replied that they were ignorant of it. They proceeded to tell me, that they abstain from pork, extract the sinew from the slaughtered cattle, and mostly marry among their own tribe, but that all other Jewish rites and customs have come into oblivion; even circumcision of their newborn sons is not exercised any more. They bury their deceased in coffins, but of a different shape than those of the Chinese are made, and do not attire the dead in secular clothes as the Chinese do, but in linen. Of the Jews I have interviewed, the older ones and little ones have been circumcised at Shanghai, but the two lads of seventeen and fifteen were opposed to the operation, and remained uncircumcised. I produced a Bible; they were able to read in it, thanks to the instructions they had received at Shanghai, as none of the Jews at Kaifung is able to read Hebrew. I asked them to translate the first verse of Genesis; this they

did, and translated "Elohim" by "Tien" and "Hashomaim" also by "Tien". I was told that by "Tien the creator" "God" is to be understood, whereas by the "created Tien" the visible "heaven" is meant. The Chinese designation "Shang-ti" for "God" they used as well, and they told me "Shang-ti" can only be used to point out "God", never can it be used to designate by it the visible "sky", whereas "Tien" can be used for "God" and for "heaven" or "sky" alike. This explanation is quite conformable to the conceptions of all Chinese. I asked them whether they knew about two memorial stones, which, it is said, were still at Kaifung at the place where the synagogue had once been standing, and I was told that they had heard only about one (that mentioned in the Chinese Repository of 1164 and 1488). The physiognomies of the Jews I interviewed were quite Chinese, the eyes of a narrow shape, broad cheek-bones and yellow-hued faces, except one youth of seventeen, whose face had something of the peculiar Jewish type. His eyes and cheek-bones were more like those of a European, and had he not worn Chinese clothes, with shaved forehead and queue, nothing could betray him to be Chinese, except the yellow hue of his face. In their external appearance they were by no means to be distinguished from other Chinese; they shave their foreheads, wear queues, attire

themselves in the same clothes as other Chinese, even the Jewish woman has crippled feet like the other Chinese women in North China. I used to meet afterwards, in the course of years, some Chinese said to be descendants of Jews. I would meet them at Chinese restaurants, in Peking and Tientsin, where no pork is served. (There are in China many sects who abstain from pork.) They told me that they were said to be descendants of Jews, but now they are Chinese in every respect without having the slightest idea what it means to be a Jew.

I quoted above the daring and improbable assumption of the Hieromonach Alexei Winogradoff that Jews were in China even at such an early date as before Moses. I do not share his opinion, but we must confess that it is startling and quite inexplicable why do the Chinese Jews designate themselves as "the sect who extract the sinew", thus identifying themselves with a legend of Jacob, and did not take some more historical and more important event in which the Jewish history is so rich? Why did they not call themselves names reminding the exodus of Egypt, or the glorious event on mount Sinai? Why did they not name themselves "the monotheists"? May we not infer from it that the first Chinese Jews when settled in China did not know these historical events at

all, and only later immigrants brought to them the Mosaic law and rites? If anybody likes to expound it in such a way, I cannot assent to it. My opinion is that the very first Jews who came to China were a part of the exiles of the ten now lost tribes of Israel, who were followed by a greater body of exiles from Jerusalem after the destruction of the first temple, as I will explain more thoroughly in the course of my essay. But why did the Jews choose a name connected with the legend of Jacob in preference to another more important and historical name? They assumed this name, I presume, after the Mohammedan religion was introduced into China, fearing, (as the Mohammedans also boast of being descendants of Abraham, do circumcise their sons, recognise the divinity of the Bible, abstain from pork and profess monotheism) lest they, the Jews, should become confounded with the Mohammedans, and took the precaution of naming themselves after a special Jewish legend about the Patriarch Jacob, by which only the Jews are bound to fulfil a rite not exercised by the Mohammedans.

When and which way did the Jews immigrate into China? This is a problem to which nobody can undertake to give a satisfactory solution, but so far as we are able to conclude from accessible sources, we may take most of them to be the

descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel, and BAINBRIDGE so certainly considered them when he supposed them to have immigrated into China about 700 B.C. (I refer to a lecture delivered by BAINBRIDGE in London some time ago).[1]

That a greater part of the lost ten tribes have settled in Afghanistan and Kabulistan we can almost take as proved, (see also Massoii Benjamin Hasheni), and no less certain is it that a considerable part of them have come to Cochin-China, and—according to the Cochin History Roll —their descendants have emigrated from there, taking their way via Persia and Media to Chinese Tartary. [2] Another part of those Jews have settled among the Chazar Tartars and formed there the highest nobility, so that all Chazarian reigning Khans were elected from the descendants of Jews. Cf. Chinese Recorder, Shanghai 1885, Vol. XVI page 47, where we read as follows:

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1) May be that at that time there were not very many Jews in China, but they immigrated in greater masses later on during the Han dynasty at the time of the destruction of the second temple, therefore the tradition of the Chinese Jews goes only as far as Mingti.

2) See סדרא בחקותי, פרק ח' ואבדתם בגוים, רבי עקיבא אומר אילו עשרת השבטים שגלו למדי.

See also Josephus, Antiquities Book IX chap. XIV. "when Shalmaneser, &c., and transplanted all the people into Media and Persia, &c., &c.

According to Forster . . . . "The remainder of the Ten tribes, according to the Cochin History Roll, migrated through Media and Persia in the direction of Chinese Tartary, and the tribes of Simeon, Ephraim and Manasseh are represented to have settled in the country of the Chazar Tartars, when they became ferocious nomades, celebrated for their horses, and dreaded for their warfare. Moreover, the Royal Family in this great Tartar tribe were Jews, and the Chagan or King of the Chozars was always chosen from this Jewish Stock."

Forster quotes Eben Haukal's Oriental Geography to the effect that "the King of Asmed city in Khozar is a Jew, and on good terms with the Padshah of Serir." He also says: "From the sixth to the tenth century the Chazars were the lords of Central Asia."

Judging from another source I am inclined to assume that the Thibetans are partly also descendants of the lost ten tribes. George Timkowski in his "Travels of the Russian Mission through Mongolia to China," London 1827, says: "The physiognomies of the Thibetans are like the physiognomies of the Gipsies," to which the editor in a marginal note remarks, "This opinion corresponds to the observations of Thomas Maning, who also visited Lhassa, he maintains that the

Thibetan physiognomies are not of the Mongolian type but resemble more the Jewish type."

There are two customs existing in some provinces of China to which I will draw the attention of the reader, and the customs may be has some connection with the immigrated Jews in China. Alexei Winogradoff in his "Istoria Biblii na Wostoke," writes "In the provinces of Honan and Kiangsu the custom of Levirate marriages prevails, and is also to be met with, though only in single cases, in other provinces. The sources cannot be traced as to when and how this custom has come to China." As chiefly in these provinces (Kaifung is in the Honan province) the Jews were settled, it may be admitted that the Jews have brought this custom (according to Deut. 25. 5—10) with them and they still continue to adhere to it even after they had become amalgamated and assimilated with the aborigenes. And should my supposition be right, we may then infer that the Jews immigrated into China before the Talmudic time, as the first Talmudists (See Talmud-Babli, Tractat Yebamoth page 39 and 109) have abolished this custom for reasons of morality and introduced for it the "Khalitza" as compulsory, a rite allowed by Biblical law only in case of extreme need (ibid.) i.e. when the brother of the deceased refused to comply with

the Levirate law, and declined to marry the widow of his deceased brother. It is, of course only a supposition, as we cannot take the Levirate custom to be exclusively of Jewish origin, for we find it also among the Mongolians (see Du Halde. Description de la Chine et de la Tartarie Chinoise. Vol. 4.). Still it could be presumed that both the Mongolians and the Chinese have taken it from the Jews, if there were not among the Indians any Levirate marriages at the time of the Rig-veda, (2400 B.C. i.e. some 300 years before Abraham) as the traces of this custom are said to have been discovered in the Veda. (See Andrew Lang. Myth, Ritual and Religion, London 1887.) Moreover, Maimonides (Moreh Nebukhim III. 49) says "This custom (Levirate marriages) existed among other nations (Egyptians and Indians) before the time of Moses, (I may add in parenthesis, that among the Jews it also existed before Moses, even at the time of Jacob. See Genesis 38) and it had with them the same reason that is plainly given in the Bible, i.e. not to allow the name of the deceased brother to become extinct, and therefore the firstborn son was considered as the son of the deceased brother." I will observe by the way that Levirate marriages existed in Scotland as late as the 11th century, according to Lord Hales. (See note 4 to Ruth 4 by John Kitto).

When Herbert Spencer (Principles of Sciology) in speaking of Levirate marriages rejects the opinion of those who take it as a remainder of the old custom of poliandry, he is quite right, but I cannot agree with his hypothesis, which he even considers as very probable, that the Levirate law among the Jews may have had its origin in compelling by law the surviving brother to take care of the unprovided widow and children of his deceased brother. as it is customary with the Ostiacs. If this were the basis of the law, it would be very curious that the Jewish law has ordered the Levirate marriage in quite the contrary case. It is quite plainly and distinctly commanded (Deut. 25. 5) "If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no son left, &c." which the Talmud expounded as if no "child" was left, then the Levirate law comes into force, whereas if there were children left, the surviving brother is not only not compelled to take care, either of them or of the widow, but in such a case a marriage is strictly forbidden. (Levit. XVIII. 16 and XX. 21).

The second custom which I indicated is, the abstaining of the Chinese from wearing garments mingled of animal and vegetable substances (Shatnes) a custom resembling the precept in Levit. 19. 19 and Deut, 22. 11. When I first heard from the Chinese that they withold from

wearing garments mingled of animal and vegetable substances I was extremely surprised, much more than by the custom of Leviratic marriages, as the Leviratic custom may have originated from different economical causes, in different countries at different times independently from each other. In China it could have been the outcome of causes quoted by Herbert Spencer, whereas in the Jewish nation the reason was probably the one which is twice mentioned in the Bible, in Genesis 38. 8 to "raise up seed to thy brother" and in Deut. 25. 6 "And it shall be, that the first-born which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel," but the prohibitive command of wearing garments mingled of animal and vegetable substances it seems has not the slightest vestige of an economical origin, and still we find it with the Chinese as with the Jews. As neither in the Bible nor in the Talmud do we find any reason for this precept I hoped to find a clue to it with the Chinese, but my hope was in vain. The only answer I could get on asking for the reason of this strange custom was " we do not wear garments mingled of animal and vegetable substances " an answer which every Chinese considers as amply sufficient, because they consider as sacred every custom which is traditionally delivered to them

from their forefathers, but certainly I could not be satisfied with this categorical but insignificant reply. I could not even find out whether this custom has been accepted by all Chinese, but I heard it prevails in Thibet.

James Finn also mentions this custom in his "The Jews in China," London 1843, and relates: "A cloth manufacturer in Stockport lately brought some samples of a mixed cotton and woollen cloth to a house of the same trade in Leeds. The proprietor of the latter having no occasion for the goods, and remarking that the colours were mostly suited to Asiatic taste, suggested that they might be sent to China. It was answered, they have been there already, and sold at a fair profit, but were returned in a few days by the Hong merchants, who pronounced it contrary to their religion that animal and vegetable substances should be woven together and worn."

From all this I have said and quoted it is obvious that the Chinese custom is still more severe than the Jewish law, as the first excludes also cotton from being allowed to be woven with wool, whereas the Jewish law prohibits only linen and wool to be mingled. This difference astonished me also, and I surmised that this difference may be taken as a proof that the reason for the two prohibitions also were different ones, and assuming

it we shall have two insolvable riddles instead of one. But after looking into the matter more attentively I have reason to think that after all, the prohibition of both are based on the same motive. We find in the Talmud (יומא ע"א ב') an explanation given by R. Jossi b'rabbi Chanina that the word „בד" means a plant growing in stalks, and that excludes cotton from being prohibited to mingle with wool, because cotton grows on trees.

The reason why it has been prohibited to the Jews to mingle these two substances together is differently presumed. Josephus (Antiquit. IV. 8. 11) writes "Let not anyone of you wear a garment made of woollen and linen, for that is appointed to be for the priests alone." We may presume that Josephus being himself a descendant of the priest caste, may have known the reason by tradition, moreover the Talmud's (ערכין ג'ב') also says that the priests were allowed to wear a garment of mingled substances, namely was the girdle which the priests had to wear when sacrificing made of wool and linen. But Maimonides gives another reason for the prohibition of mingled substances; he says (מורה נבוכים ג' ל"ז) ". . . . this was also the motive to prohibit the wearing of clothes of wool and linen mingled together, because the priests of the heathen used to combine animal and vegetable substances in one garment."

As the Chinese like the Jews have always been monotheists, I think that both may have prohibited on the motive which is given by Maimonides, namely, to prevent heathen customs from penetrating into the habits of their nations. I will yet add that the Chinese as well as the Jews allow the garments to be woven of silk and wool, or silk and linen or cotton mingled together.

Before concluding I must add, in justice to the old civilised Chinese nation, that the Jews in China have never had to complain of intolerance; they were never under exceptional laws; they were never persecuted or despised for their religion. They always enjoyed full rights like the Chinese. No doubt the full emancipation on one side, and their having been so completely cut off from their Western co-religionists on the other side, was one of the causes of their becoming absorbed by the Chinese.

James Finn, who lived many years in China, and was afterwards British Consul at Jerusalem writes in his book "The Jews in China" "In reviewing the past ages of Israelitish sojourn in China, as well as our limited knowledge will permit, we immediately feel how happily tame is that retrospect compared with the dark and sanguinary annals of Jews in Mohammedan and Popish realms, for the toleration of the Chinese spirit has never

yet discovered that the Hebrew Passover is celebrated with an appetite for human blood; and happy is the nation which, while it has had an opportunity to do so, has not persecuted them for religion's sake, because it is written, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Gen. 12 3.)"

Speaking about the assimilation of the Jews in China, it is impossible to avoid the question, why have the Jews been absorbed by the Chinese and not by the Christians? Surely many circumstances acting together brought about the assimilation, and I will lay before the reader my solution of this question, as a result of my study of the problem during many years of my sojourn in China.

It is unquestionably true, and would be of salutary consequences if the powerful dictators of the world would take it for guidance, that to grant unrestricted emancipation and freedom is the most practical means for making a sincere and devoted friend of an immigrated alien minority or even of a subdued nation, whereas pressure, restrictions and persecution provoke opposition and enmity. It will always remain true that the best way to conquer an enemy is to make a friend of him. China realised this truth and has always acted accordingly. China has always granted equal

freedom and equal rights to everyone regardless of nationality or faith, and she has succeeded in converting the adopted strangers into true and faithful sons of their great country; witness the Cossacks captured at Albazin in 1685. China did not ill-treat the 101 soldiers and their clergyman, Maxim Leontieff, whom she brought as captives to Peking; nay, she granted them the enjoyment of the same rights and privileges as the Chinese themselves, portioned out to them fields and gardens, allowed them to profess their Orthodox creed, even permitted Russia to establish in Peking and Orthodox mission for instructing the captured soldiers in their religious precepts. The result of all that was, that notwithstanding all the endeavours Russia has made to retain the Cossacks as Orthodox Christians they became by degrees absorbed by the Chinese, and now the descendants of those Cossacks have only a faint recollection of their parents having been once Russian and Orthodox.

But freedom and emancipation alone would not be sufficient to make a cultured nation, as the Jews have been since thousands of years, abandon their faith and their nationality. The Jewish nation was in possession of Holy Scriptures declaring them to be the only beloved chosen people of God; they had a history full of heroic

deeds, and were always proud of both.(*)

Now, it is true, freedom and emancipation could be sufficient to make of the immigrated alien Jews patriotic sons of China, as freedom and emancipation have made the Jews in France and England patriots heart and soul. But why have the Jews in China been assimilated and have even abandoned their religion, and have renounced their privilege to be the firstborn son of God? Why could the Jews resist the highly cultured nations of England and France and keep their own? When we see the same Jewish nation successfully defending their position on one battlefield and being thoroughly overpowered and beaten in another struggle, must we not infer from it, that

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(*) Kant ("Die Religion," in a note to section 3. Edition 1749) says: "The reason why the Jews have not assimilated is, because a nation who is in possession of Holy Scriptures will never fuse with a nation without sacred books as the Roman Empire and the whole civilised world was at that time, having only time-honoured customs. Nay, the nation possessing written sacred books (although a conquered one) makes proselytes among their conquerors. It was the case with the Jews when they came to live among the heathen Romans, they brought with them the written law and succeeded by it to conquer spiritually the Romans, and later on the whole heathen world." Senecca deplored bitterly that the conquered Jews were dictating laws to the conquerors. (See Augustin De Civiate Dei VI. II.)

success and failure was not dependent on the power of the Jews so much as on the weapons and strength of their opponents? Being myself a Jew I feel somewhat uncomfortable in analysing the causes and effects of these struggles, ending so differently. But it can never be humiliating to confess the truth, and I must confess that the Jewish position in the struggle against the Christians was very strong and advantageous, and on the contrary, very weak and disadvantageous against the Chinese, taking it, of course, only so far as men could judge and dared to decide themselves on the qualities of the different religions, regardless of the axiomatic truth that religion can only exist when accepted and trusted without any criticism.

When Christianity began to develop and to find disciples, the Judæo-Christians were thoroughly religious and law-abiding Jews; they strictly obeyed the Mosaic law and fulfilled every command of the Old-Testament, only in their believing Jesus to be the Messiah (Christ) did they differ from the other Jews, and when Paul decided to modify the law, to renounce so many commandments, the Judæo-Christians abused him and rejected his writings as those of an apostate. Paul was therefore urged by James, the head of the Judæo-Christians, to satisfy by an obvious

action the "many thousands of Jews which believe and are zealous of the law" to convince them "that thou thyself (Paul) also walkest orderly and keepest the law" (see the Acts, XXI and Eusebius). But Paul, who was entirely a Hellenist, in thought and sentiment, as it is evident from nearly all the epistles that bear his name, did not care about their attacks, although he yielded to the demand of James; being convinced that only by syncretism was there any hope of planting Christianity among the pagans, he acted accordingly and succeeded.

The circumstances were at that time very favourable to success, as on one side the enlightened Jews were imbued with the philosophy of Alexandria, Antiochia, and Asia Minor, and were indifferent to the precepts of the Jewish law, and on the other side the moral men among the Heathens were disgusted of the mischievous immorality practised by the idolatrous pagans. Paul found support in these classes and succeeded in modifying the original Judæo-Christianity into quite a new faith after his own design, so much has he remodelled the Judæo-Christian original faith that such a renowned scholar as Professor Adolph Harnack (Das Wesen des Christenthums. Leipzig 1890) says very correctly "The real founder of Christianity was Paul," as without the con-

cessions to the heathens by Paul, the pagans would never have agreed to be converted to Christianity. The heathens adopted the new-stamped religion, based on Jewish law tempered by compromises made to the pagan taste, as a quite new religion and were satisfied, whereas the Jews continued to look upon it as something anomalous. The Jews did not recognise Jesus either as a Saviour or as a Messiah, and so long as the Temple was not destroyed the strong-minded Jews had no desire for a Messiah, but were longing for a living, daring and fighting hero, like Judah Maccabeus, to lead them to victory without pretending to be a Messiah. These Jews naturally could not see in Jesus the ideal of a leader when he was preaching "whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." It was only the small community of Judæo-Christians, all in all some 500 despairing fantastical "meek and poor in spirit" who put their hope in a Messiah. Nay, the strong-minded Jews did not even consider Jesus a Rabbi of great erudition; they simply looked on Christianity as on distorted Judaism, corrupted by invented dogmas contrary to the original Jewish strict monotheism, The Jews although they have gladly adopted wordly customs and secular science from the Christians, could not assimilate and let their religion be absorbed by

Christianity, as Christianity was considered by them Judaism gone astray. The high ethical precepts of Christianity could not make any impression upon them; as they found the same moral tenets in the Bible and Talmud, they considered them as merely borrowed from the Jewish Scriptures. Time went on, Christianity became very strong, and developed into the supreme ruling power in Europe; but alas, the Jews have to tell a sad tale of the power wielded by the Popes, by the crusaders, and by all the others uneducated, uncouth and barbaric rulers, all of them pretending to be Christians. No wonder that the Jews learned to despise the professors of such a Christianity who, while chanting Jewish hymns to the Jewish God, robbed and slaughtered the Jewish people. Moreover, the Jews were always well versed in the Scriptures and generally more educated than even the Christian theologists of those dark times, and were astonished to see that the bulk of Christians had no idea at all of the origin of Christianity, and were completely ignorant of the Bible and its commandments.

In quite another position were the Jews who had immigrated into China. I must premise that I am on the side of those Sinologists who consider the Chinese to be monotheists (among them Max Müller and James Legge). The difference

between the monotheism of China and the monotheism of Jews, Christians and Mohammedans is, so to say, that the former confess only the principle of monotheism, whereas the latter contend the absolute necessity of recognising also a certain monotheistic dynasty. The Chinese are for monotheism in principle, they do not care whether you agree with them to name the Only One God "Shangti" as they do, or "Jahveh" (with or without a Trinity) whereas Jews, Christians and Mohammedans not only demand the belief in monotheism, but with them it is a *conditio sine qua non* that "Jahveh" must be the Only God. (The Christians compel one moreover to believe in the Trinity).

When the first Jews, the descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel reached China, and it took them presumably some 50—100 years to come there by the roundabout way over Afghanistan, Kabulistan, Cochin and Tartary, they naturally must have been surprised to find a great civilised nation with a history thousands of years older than their own (Yao the great reigned in China some 200 years before Abraham was born) and just those were the days of Chinese glory, when the nation was under the fresh influence of the highest philosophical doctrine of monotheism as taught by their immortal Philosopher "Lao-tze"

(born 604 B.C.) who regarded any name given to the abstract idea of the Godhead as a profanation, even the name "God" he did not admit. (See Victor v. Straus's Translation of "Tao-teh-king.") And no less was the nation imbued with the refined administrative reforming notions of Confucius (born 551 B.C.) all of them based on high ethical principles. After these heroes of human learning and justice followed Mencius (180 years after Confucius) who expounded, preached and divulged the doctrines and teachings of his great master Confucius. So the Jews for the first time came face to face with a nation confessing monotheism, though without the slightest idea of "Jahveh" and of his chosen people;[1]) a nation without a nobility to grasp the best positions in the government, but giving all honour and preference to the learned man, the same as it has always been with the Jews; a nation possessing Holy Scriptures of a superior ethical quality though without pretensions to revelation, [2]) but

1) That the Jews in course of time, learned to consider the Chinese religion as monotheistic is proven by the inscriptions on the memorial stones (see Part II.)

2) A precarious position impossible to defend successfully against attacks from thorough unbelievers on one side, and difficult to give a satisfactory answer to the interrogations of believers in Godhead but opposing the belief in revelations on the other side, questioning why some nations needed

only as teachings of their sages, a nation in possession of a book called "Yih-king" which served the Chinese as the " Urim-We-Thumim " did the Jews in the Biblical epoch, and is of such high philosophical value that, as proved by Dr. Paul Carus, Leibnitz had taken many a thing from it. (see Dr. Paul Carus "Chinese Philosophy" Chicago 1898) and Confucius, in the last year of his life said, if he had to live another fifty years he would devote the whole time to the study of the Yih-king. No wonder that all that stimulated the Jews to contemplation and comparisons.

To prove that the qualities mentioned were really possessed by the Chinese, I will quote some prominent authors. Thomas Taylor Meadows (The Chinese and their Rebellions, London 1856) says: "No nation can boast to possess Holy Scriptures so totally free from abusive sentences as the Chinese. Not one sentence is to be found in the Chinese Holy Scriptures which could not be read in every English family." Schopenhauer (Wille in der Natur, Sinologie) says: " For its inner excellence, for its truth and for its great

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revelations when the sages of others could reach the same high moral standing by their own ethical mind, does it not mean that revelation stigmatises those nations, to whom it was granted to be of an inferior intelligence, lacking sages of common sense and high ethical preceptions?

number of professors, we have to consider this religion (Buddhism) as the most distinguished in the world." The Jesuit historian Jarric (quoted by A. R. Colquhoun in his "China in Transformation, London 1898) wrote: "If Plato could come back from Hades, he would declare that the Republic he desired had become a reality in China." The prominent Roman Catholic missionary Huc wrote about sixty years ago (Das Chinesische Reich, Leipzig 1856): "Europe is endeavouring to become (in religious matters) what China has been for thousands of years." C. F. R. Allen in his preface to the Shi-king writes: "That which made the most profound impression on me, was, in what a pure monotheism the old Chinese believed, and their bright ideas of God. He was not with them a tribal God, but the supreme Lord and the supreme ruler of the whole universe."

The astonishment of the immigrated Jews must have grown continually, seeing that all the ethical tenets which were revealed to them by God as a preference to his chosen people they found in China not only taught and commanded but practically exercised. They, the aliens, were treated with the same kindness as the Chinese themselves, and became aware of the fact that "to love his neighbour, and to love the stranger as himself," which was commanded to them by

God (Levit. XIX), and "not to do to others as one would not that it should be done to him," *) was taught to the Chinese by their sages out of righteousness and common sense. The Jews found further, that the same sages who taught the people love for their fellowmen in the highest and noblest degree (Teachings of Lao-tze and Buddha) did not teach any compulsory obligations of men to God, but left it to the discretion of every one to treat religion as a strictly private affair. Neither are the Chinese commanded to love God, nor to believe in God, nor to fulfil commandments not comprehensible to men, of which there are many in the Bible (although the commandments of the Bible certainly have their good reasons, but are not known to us); even more, one of the three founders of Chinese religion, Confucius, was himself an agnostic.

Meanwhile the Chinese continued to give to the Jews all privileges and all rights, making friends of them, and the Jews could not see any reason for keeping themselves aloof from the Chinese; they approached each other, intermarried and by degrees the more convenient religion (according to human understanding) has proved to be the fittest to survive.

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*) Talmud Babli, Tract. Sabbath, 31. 1.

It would be a very interesting task and worth while the expense, if a competent man could be commissioned to investigate at Kaifung the present condition of the Jews still living there. It would be interesting not only for the Jews as a nation but also for science in general. I am sure the half assimilated, half amalgamated Jews would at once return to their old faith if support were given to them to facilitate it. The Jews I met at Shanghai were glad and happy to work hard, finding consolation and contentment in knowing themselves to belong to the old Israelitic tribe.

II.

THE JEWISH MEMORIAL STONES AND THEIR LESSON.

The History of the Jews in China.

THE JEWISH MEMORIAL STONES AND THEIR LESSON.

Since the time when the first startling intelligences reached the West that there were Jews living in China, the searching minds of Jews and Christians alike were alive to the question of the origin of this detected Jewish branch. But, unfortunately, the obtained results have been near to nothing, as not only have the Jews there become extinct altogether, but not even copious records have remained after them, and all we have been able to procure were some faint vestiges of Jewish congregations, gleaned from engravings on memorial stones, so that when we speak of "the Jews of China" it is to be understood as "the Jews who once lived in China," as there are no more Jews in China now. There is no Jewish congregation in existence, not even one pure and unmixed Jewish family is left. Since hundreds of years the Jews have been gradually and constantly under the process of absorption, and it has strongly worked

on them, so that they are now totally mingled with the Chinese masses, and even the faint traces will soon be effaced. When we now and then met a single individual who still preserved a slight glimpse of tradition to the effect of being a descendant of the Jewish race he looked on it quite indifferently, contemplating it as a passed stage of evolution, it being for him, at the most, merely a scientific problem, insignificant to him about the same as is to us the problem whether we are the degenerated descendants of progenitors who have been supermen something like angels, or whether we have improved so much, by so many evolutions as to become highly cultured scions of a low stock of apes.

From a practical point of view it would seem to be a waste of time to investigate into the causes which brought about the effect of annihilation of the large Jewish population which once flourished in China, being sure that even the breath coming from the four winds will not be vigorous enough to revive their dry bones. But the Jewish nation is at the present juncture in a most critical position, resembling a woman in throes, who although being in a dangerous state, and quite on the verge of death, is yet more likely, and in course of nature, about to bring forth new life. When from one side several bar-

baric countries have let loose all forces of the hell to destroy the Jewish nation, ill-treated from yore, applicating all means of felony and vileness to undermine its existence, we at the same time see on the other side a strong movement, animated by a determined will to regenerate the old depressed nation, which will not be any more content with its lot, to boast as hitherto, of having been the medium to transmit the monotheistic religion to the world, but endeavours to regain and obtain for itself a share in the materialistic world, and I do not hesitate to express my strong hope and conviction that our nation, like the woman in throes, has more right to hope a natural development to success and life than to failure and death.

Optimistic as we may be, we must, however, not leave without attention every phase of the long and sad history of our nation, but we are rather bound to take great care not to commit any blunders, lest they should become stumbling blocks to debar our path to freedom and deliverance.

From this standpoint a close study to examine the circumstances which caused the doom of our national branch in China is now more important for us than it has been since we have lost our independence some 1850 years ago.

With this purpose in mind I will herewith reproduce translations of several inscriptions on monumental tablets and memorial stones detected at Kai-fung-fu, giving a proper idea of the religious standing of faith of the Jews in China at different times. And when we sum up the inferences they will surely supply us with some valuable hints for directing our nation at the present turning-point.

I.

The Memorial Stone of 1164 C.E.

"Regarding the Jewish religion: Our first ancestor was Adam, our religion was founded by Abraham, afterwards Moses came, who was the mediator of the Holy Scriptures. At the time of the Han Dynasty (East-Han-Dynasty, 25 till 221 C.E.) this religion was introduced in China. In the second year of Hias Tsung (1164. Sung Dynasty) a synagogue was erected at Kaifung. Those who worship idols and images as gods, pray in vain to inane phantoms, but those who esteem and follow the Scriptures know the origin of everything. The Holy Scriptures and the eternal wisdom supply and complete each other to state and conform wherefrom and how man was created. All confessors of this creed strive after good deeds, fulfil it, and abhor sin."

II.

The Memorial Stone of 1488 C.E.

"Abraham the patriarch who founded the Israelitish religion, was the nineteenth *) descendant from Adam. From the beginning of the world, the patriarchs have handed down the precept, that we must not make images and similitudes, and that we must not worship superior and inferior spirits; for neither can images and similitudes protect, nor superior and inferior spirits afford us aid. The patriarch thinking upon Heaven, the pure and ethereal Being who dwells in high, the most honourable and without compose, that Divine providence, who, without speaking, causes the four seasons to revolve and the myriad of things to grow; and looking at the budding of spring, the growth of summer, the ingathering of the harvest, and the storing of winter,—at the objects that fly, dive, move and vegetate, whether they flourish or decay, bloom or droop, all so easy and natural in their productions and transformations, in their assumptions of form and colour, was suddenly roused to reflection, and understood this deep mystery; he then sincerely sought after the correct instruction, and adoringly praised the

*) It is to be accounted for by the omission of Cainan from the genealogy.

true Heaven; with his whole heart he served, and with undivided attention reverenced Him; by this means he set up the foundation of religion, and caused it to be handed down to the present day. This happened according to our inquiry in the 146th year of the Chow state. From him the doctrines were handed down to the great teacher and legislator Mòses, who according to our computation lived about the 613th year of the same state.*) This man was intelligent from his birth, pure and disinterested, endowed with benevolence and righteousness, virtue and wisdom all complete; he sought and obtained the sacred writings on the top of Sinai's Hill, where he fasted forty days and nights, repressing his carnal desires, refraining even from sleep, and spending his time in sincere devotion. His piety moved the heart of Heaven and the sacred

*) We can not refer this to the Chow dynasty, which commenced B.C. 1122, the 146th year of which would synochronize with the time of Rehabom; and no Israelite could be so ignorant of the antiquity of his race, as to suppose that Abraham flourished only 1000 years B.C. We are necessitated therefore to refer the Chow spoken of in the text, to the state founded by Han-tsi, who flourished in the days of Shun B.C. 2254; between which date and that of B.C. 1766 when the Shang state was consolidated we must look for the period from which the 146 years referring to Abraham, and the 613 years referring to Moses, is to be reckoned.

writings, amounting to 53 sections *) were thus obtained. Their contents are deep and mysterious, their promises calculated to influence men's good feelings, and their threatenings to repress their corrupt imaginations. The doctrines were again handed down to the time of the reformer of religion and wise instructor Ezra, whose descent was reckoned from the founder of our religion, and whose teaching contained the right clue to his instructions, viz.: the duty of honouring Heaven by appropriate worship; so that he could be considered capable of unfolding the mysteries of the religion of our forefathers.

But religion must consist in the purity and truth of Divine worship. Purity refers to the pure One, who is without mixture; truth to the correct One, who is without corruption; worship consists in reverence and in bowing down to the ground. Men in their daily avocations must not for a single moment forget Heaven, but at the hours of four in the morning, mid-day, and six in

*) The Pentateuch is divided in our Common Bibles in 54 sections, but in Pentateuchs brought from Persia, the Massoretic 52nd and 53rd sections are combined in one, making together 53 sections. Seemingly, the division in 53 sections aims at giving one section for every Sabbath of the 52 Sabbaths of the year, and the last section (Deut. 33-34) for Shemini Atzereth or Simchath Torah.

the evening, should thrice perform their adorations, which is the true principle of the religion of Heaven. The form observed by the virtuous men of antiquity was first to bathe and wash their heads, taking care at the same time to purify their hearts and correct their senses, after which they reverently approached before Eternal Reason and the sacred writings. Eternal Reason is without form or figure, like the Eternal Reason of Heaven, exalted on high. We will here endeavour to set forth the general course of Divine worship in order. First, the worshipper bending his body, does reverence to Eternal Reason, by which means he recognizes Eternal Reason as present in such bending of the body; then standing upright in the midst, without declining, he does obeisance to Eternal Reason, by which means he recognizes Eternal Reason as standing in the midst; in stillness, maintaining his spirit and silently praising, he venerates Eternal Reason showing that he incessantly remembers Heaven, in motion, examining himself and lifting up his voice, he honours Eternal Reason, showing that he unfailingly remembers Heaven. This is the way in which our religion teaches us to look towards invisible space and perform our adorations. Retiring three paces, the worshipper gets suddenly to the rear, to show his reverence for

the Eternal Reason who is behind him, advancing five steps he looks on before, to show his reverence for the Eternal Reason, who is in front of his person, he bows towards the left, reverencing Eternal Reason whereby he admires the Eternal Reason, who is on his left; he bows towards the right, reverencing Eternal Reason, whereby he adores the Eternal Reason who is on his right; looking up he reverences Eternal Reason, to show that he considers Eternal Reason as above him; looking down, he reverences Eternal Reason, to show that he considers Eternal Reason as close to him; at the close he worships Eternal Reason manifesting reverence in his act of adoration. But to venerable Heaven and to neglect ancestors is to fail in the services which are their due. In the spring and autumn, therefore, men sacrifice to their ancestors, to show that they serve the dead as they do the living, and pay the same respect to the departed that they do to those who survive, they offer sheep and oxen, and present the fruits of the season, to show that they do not neglect the honour due to ancestors, when they are gone from us. During the course of every month we fast and abstain four times, which constitutes the door by which religion is entered, and the basis of which goodness is accumulated. It is called an entrance, because we practice

one act of goodness to-day, and another to-morrow; thus having commenced the merit of abstinence, we add to our store, avoiding the practice of every vice, and reverently performing every virtue. Every seventh day we observe a holy rest, which when terminated begins anew; as it is said in the Tih-king. *)

The good man in the practice of virtue, apprehends lest the time should prove too short. At each of the four seasons, we lay ourselves under a seven days restraint, in remembrance of the trials endured by our ancestors; by which means, we venerate our predecessors and reward our progenitors; we also abstain entirely from food during a whole day, when we reverently pray to Heaven, repent of our former faults, and practice anew the duties of each day. The Tih-king also says: "When the wind and thunder prevail, the good man thinks of what virtues he

*) The Tih-king (Book of Permutations) is one of the sacred writings of the Chinese. According to tradition it was composed in the time of Noah, when Emperor Fu-hi reigned in China (2850 B.C.E.). Another version says that the Book has been delivered from Heaven to Emperor Fu-hi.

The Book is thoroughly mystic and esoteric, and it very much resembles the Jewish Cabbalistic "Sepher Jetzirah."

In my Hebrew book on China and on the Jews in China ("Hassinim" London 1911) I adduced many parallels of these two mystic books.

shall practice, and if he has any errors, he reforms them."

Thus our religion system has been handed down and communicated from one to another. It came originally from Teen-chu (India). Those who introduced it in obedience to the Divine commands were seventy Tsungs (clans) viz: those of Yen, Li, Ngai, Kau, Muh, Chaw, Kin, Chao, Chang, Shih, Hwang, Nieh, Tso, Pih, etc. These brought as tribute some Western cloth. The Emperor of the Sung dynasty *) said "Since they have come to our central Land, and reverently observe the cutsoms of their ancestors, let them hand down their doctrines at Pien-Lang (now Kai-fung-fu)" In the year 1163 C.E. Lieh Ching and Wu-sz-ta superintended this religion, and Yen-tu-lah built the Synagogue. In the year 1279 C.E. Wu-sz-ta rebuilt the ancient Temple of Truth and Purity, which was situated in the Tu-shi-tze street, on the south-east side; on each side the area of the Temple extended 350 feet.

When the first Emperor of the Ming dynasty established his throne and pacified the people of the Empire (1390 C.E.), all those who came under the civilizing influence of our country were presented with ground, on which they might

*) Probably the Northern Sung which flourished 519 C.E.

dwell quietly, and profess their religion without molestation, in order to manifest a feeling of sympathizing benevolence, which views all alike. But as this Temple required someone to look after its concerns, there were appointed for that purpose Li-ching, Li-Shih, Yen-Ping-tu, Ngai King, Chow, Ngan, Li-king, etc., who were themselves upright and intelligent men, and able to admonish others, having attained the title of Manlah. So that up to this time, the sacred vestments, ceremonies and music, are all maintained according to the prescribed pattern, and every word and action is conformed to the ancient rule, every man therefore keeps the laws, and knows how to reverence Heaven and respect the patriarchs, being faithful to the prince and filial to parents, all in consequence of the efforts of these teachers.

Yen-Ching, who was skilled in medicine, in the year 1421 C.E. received the imperial commands communicated through Chau-fuh Ting Wang, to present incense in the Temple of Truth and Purity, which was then repaired; about the same time also, there was received the imperial tablet of the Ming dynasty to be erected in the temple. In the year 1422 C.E. the above-named officer reported, that he had executed some trust reposed in him; whereupon the Emperor changed

his surname to Chau, and conferred upon him an embroidered garment, and a title of dignity elevating him to be a magistrate in Cheh-kiang province. In the year 1446, Li-yung and some others built the three rooms in front of the synagogue.

It appears that in the fourth year of the Emperor King-ti (1461 C.E.) the Yellow River had inundated the synagogue, but the foundations were still preserved; whereupon Ngai-king and others petitioned to be allowed to restore it to its original form, and through the chief magistrate of the prefecture, received an order from the Treasurer of the Honan Province, granting that it might be done in conformity with the old form of the Temple of Truth and Purity that had existed in the time of Chi-Yuen (1280 C.E.), whereupon Li-Yung provided the funds, and the whole was made quite new.

During the reign of Ching-hwa (1470 C.E.) Kaw-Kien provided the funds for repairing three rooms at the back of the synagogue. He also deposited therein three volumes of the sacred writings. Such is the history of the front and back rooms of the synagogue. During the reign of Tien-Shun (1450 C.E.) Shih-Pin, Kau-Kien, and Chang-Hiuen, had brought from the professors of this religion at Ning-po, one volume of the

sacred writings; while Chan-Ying-Ching, of Ning-po, sent another volume of the Divine word, which was presented to the synagogue at Pien-lang (Kai-fung-fu). His younger brother Ying also provided funds, and in the second year of Hung-chi (1488) strengthened the foundations of the synagogue. Ying with myself, Chung, entrusted to Chau-Tsun the setting up of the present tablet: Yen-tu-lah had already fixed the foundation of the building, and commenced the work, towards the completion of which all the families contributed, and thus provided the sacred implements and furniture connected with the cells for depositing the sacred writings, causing the whole synagogue to be painted and ornamented, and put in a state of complete repair. For I conceive that the three religions of China have each their respective Temples, and severally honour the founders of their faith; among the literati, there is the Temple of Ta-ching (Great Perfection), dedicated to Confucius; among the Buddhists, there is the Temple of Shing-yung (the Sacred Countenance), dedicated to Niman (Buddha); and among the Taoists, there is the Temple of Yuh-hwang. So also in the True and Pure religion there is the Temple of Israel, erected to the honour of Hwang-tien (the Great Heaven). Although our religion agrees in many

respects with the religion of the literati, from which it differs in a slight degree, yet the main design of it is nothing more than reverence for Heaven, and veneration for ancestors, fidelity to the prince, and obedience to parents, just that which is included in the five human relations, the five constant virtues, with the three principal connections of life. It is to be observed, however, that people merely know that in the Temple of Truth and Purity ceremonies are performed, when we reverence Heaven, and worship towards no visible object; but they do not know that the great origin of Eternal Reason comes from Heaven, and that what has been handed down from the old to the present day, must not be falsified.

Although our religion enjoins worship thus earnestly, we do not render it merely with the view of securing happiness to ourselves, but seeing that we have received the favours of the prince, and enjoyed the emoluments conferred by him, we carry to the utmost our sincerity in worship with the view of manifesting fidelity to our prince, and gratitude to our country. Thus we pray that the Emperor's rule may be extended to myriads of years, and the Imperial dynasty may be firmly established; as long as heaven and earth endure, may there be favour-

able winds and seasonable showers, with the mutual enjoyment of tranquility. We have engraven these our ideas on the imperishable marble, that they may be handed down to the latest generation.

Composed by a promoted literary graduate of the prefecture of Kai-fung-fu, named Kin-Chung; inscribed by a literary graduate of purchased rank belonging to the district Tsiang-fu, named Tsau-Tso; and engraven by a literary graduate of purchased rank, belonging to the prefecture of Kai-fung-fu, named Fu-Ju. Erected on a fortunate day, in the middle of summer, in the second year of Hung-Chi (1488 C.E.), by a disciple of the religion of Truth and Purity.

III.

The Memorial Stone of 1151 C.E.

It has been said that the sacred writings are for the purpose of embodying Eternal Reason, and that Eternal Reason is for the purpose of communicating the sacred writings. What is Eternal Reason? The principle which is in daily use and constant practice; and which has been generally followed out by men of ancient and modern times. It is present in everything, and the same in all seasons; in fact there is no place in which Eternal Reason does not reside. But

Eternal Reason without the sacred writings cannot be preserved; and the sacred writings without Eternal Reason cannot be carried out into action; for men get into confusion, and do not know whither they are going, until they are carried away by foolish schemes and strange devices; hence the doctrines of the Sages have been handed down in the six sacred classics*) in order to convey the knowledge to future generations, and to extend his benefits to the most distant period.

With respect to the Israelitish religion, we find on inquiry, that its first ancestor Adam came originally from Teen-chu (India) and during the Chow state the sacred writings were in existence. The sacred writings embodying Eternal Reason consist of 53 sections. The principles therein contained are very obstruse, and the Eternal Reason therein revealed is very mysterious, being treated with the same veneration as Heaven. The founder of this religion is Abraham, who is considered the first teacher of it. Then came Moses, who established the law, and handed down the sacred writings. After his time, during the Han dynasty this religion entered

*) The sacred classics of the Chinese: 1. Yih-king. 2. Shi-king. 3. Shu-king. 4. Li-king. 5. Chin-Chiu, and 6. Lun-yu, leaving unmentioned the sacred writings which were composed and compiled after Confucius.

China. In 1164 C.E. a synagogue was built at Pien (Kai-fung-fu). In 1296 C.E. the old Temple was rebuilt, as a place in which the sacred writings might be deposited with veneration.

Those who practice this religion are to be found in other places besides Pien (Kai-fung-fu) but wherever they are met with, throughout the whole world, they all without exception honour the sacred writings, and venerate Eternal Reason. The characters in which the sacred writings are penned, differ indeed from those employed in the books of the learned in China, but if we trace their principles up to their origin, we shall find that they are originally none other than the Eternal Reason which is commonly followed by mankind. Hence it is that when Eternal Reason is followed by rulers and subjects, rules will be respectful, and subjects faithful; when Eternal Reason is followed by parents and children, parents will be kind, and children filial; when Eternal Reason is followed by elder and younger brothers, the former will be friendly and the latter reverential; when Eternal Reason is followed by husbands and wives, husbands will be harmonious, and wives obedient; when Eternal Reason is followed by friends and companions, then they will severally become faithful and sincere. In Eternal Reason there is nothing greater than

benevolence and rectitude, and in following it out, men naturally display the feeling of compassion and a sense of shame; in Eternal Reason there is nothing greater than propriety and wisdom, and in following it out, men naturally exhibit the feeling of respect and a sense of rectitude. When Eternal Reason is followed in fasting and abstinence, men necessarily feel reverential and awe-struck; when Eternal Reason is followed out in sacrificing to ancestors, men necessarily feel filial and sincere; when Eternal Reason is followed in Divine worship, men bless and praise high Heaven, the Producer and Nourisher of the myriad of things, while in their demeanour and carriage they consider sincerity and respect as the one thing needful. With respect to widows and orphans, the poor and the destitute, together with the sick and maimed, the deaf and dumb, these must all be relieved and assisted, that they may not utterly fail. When poor men wish to marry and have not the means, or when such wish to inter-relative, and are not able to accomplish it, the necessary expenses for such must be duly provided, Only let those who are mourning for their friends carefully avoid rich viands and intoxicating liquors, and those who are conducting funeral ceremonies not be emulous of external pomp. Let them in the first place

avoid complying with superstitious customs, and in the second place, not make molten or graven images, but in everything follow the ceremonies that have been introduced from Teen-chu. Let there be no false weights and measures employed in trade, with the view of defrauding others.

Looking around us on the professors of this religion, we find that there are some who strive for literary honours, aiming to exalt their parents and distinguish themselves; there are some who engage in government employ both at Court and in the provinces, seeking to serve their prince and benefit the people, while some defend the country and resist the enemy, thus displaying their patriotism by their faithful conduct; there are others again, who in private stations cultivate personal virtue, and diffuse their influence over a whole region; others there are who plough the waste land, sustaining their share of the public burdens; and others who attend to mechanical arts, doing their part towards supporting the state; or who follow mercantile pursuits, and thus gather in profit from every quarter: but all of them should venerate the command of Heaven, obey the royal laws, attend to the five constant virtues, observe the duties of the human relations, reverently follow the customs of their ancestors, be filial towards their parents, respectful to their

superiors, harmonious among their neighbours, and friendly with their associates, teaching their children and descendants, thus laying up a store of good works, while they repress trifling animosities, in order to complete great affairs; the main idea of all the prohibitions and commands consists in standing to those things. This in fact is the great object set forth in the sacred writings, and the daily and constant duties inculcated by Eternal Reason. Thus the command of Heaven influencing virtuous nature, is by this means carried out to perfection; the religion which inculcates obedience to Eternal Reason is by this means entered upon; and the virtues of benevolence, rectitude, propriety, and wisdom are by this means maintained.

From the beginning of the world our first father Adam handed the doctrine down to Abraham, Abraham handed it down to Isaac, Isaac handed it down to Jacob, Jacob handed it down to the twelve patriarchs and the twelve patriarchs handed it down to Moses; Moses handed it down to Aaron, Aaron handed it down to Joshua and Joshua handed it down to Ezra, by whom the doctrines of the holy religion were first sent abroad, and the letters of the Jewish nation first made plain. All those who profess this religion aim at the practice of goodness, and

avoid the commission of vice, morning and evening performing their devotion, and with a sincere mind cultivating personal virtues

They practice fasting and abstinence on the prescribed days, and bring eating and drinking under proper regulations. They make the sacred writings their study and their rule, obeying and believing them in every particular; then may they expect that the blessing of Heaven will abundantly, and the favour of providence be unfailingly conferred; every individual obtaining the credit of virtuous conduct, and every family experiencing the happiness of Divine protection. In this way perhaps our professors will not fail of carrying out the religion handed down by their ancestors, nor will they neglect the ceremonies which they are bound to observe.

We have engraved this on a tablet, placed in the synagogue, to be handed down to distant ages, that future generations may carefully consider it.

This tablet was erected by the families Tou-Tang, Yen, Li, Kau, Chau, Kin, J, and Chang, at the rebuilding of the synagogue, in the first month of autumn, in the 7th year of Emperor Ching-teh of the Ming dynasty (1511 C.E.).

IV.

The Memorial Stone of 1663 C.E.

The composer of the inscription begins with an abundance of prefatory phrases to make it clear that there is nothing in the sacred writings of the Jews which does not tally with the six sacred writings of the Chinese. He exerts himself to inculcate it as an axiomatic certitude. He praises the constancy of the Jews in religious matters, and adds that the Chinese scarcely differ from them in the worship of heaven, in the duties of civil life and in honouring the dead. He also gives details of the history of the Jews in China in nearly the same words as the memorial stone of 1488. He relates of the sorrows and misfortunes which have afflicted the Jews in 1642 C.E., the year when the Ming dynasty was deposed, and Kai-fung-fu was besieged for 6 months by the rebel Li-tse-tsing. He describes at length the inundation of the town which was caused by order of the commander of the Emperor's forces to destroy the dikes of the Yellow River with the purpose of flooding the town and drowning the rebels. It relates that a great number of Jews lost their lives, and only some 200 families, who escaped over the river northsides saved their lives, and that the synagogue

was destroyed, and 26 of the sacred volumes were lost. The inscription mentions also the names of those people who did not shrink from waging their lives in rescuing the sacred volumes from the floods. It relates that these sacred books which were saved from the waves, and other books which were recovered from the rubbish-heaps among ruins, were brought into the house of a private man outside the town, where the Jews used to assemble for prayers.

Ten years afterwards—the inscription continues—a Jewish Mandarin Tsao-ying-tseng, visited the place with a detachment of soldiers who served under his command. They rebuilt the town, repaired the roads, restored the bridges and helped the sufferers. Great assistance has been given to Tsao-ying-tseng by his brother Ying-te, and they succeeded in settling the poor Jews in the neighbourhood of the synagogue, which was rebuilt in the 10th year of the Emperor Shin-chi (1653 C.E.), who was the first Emperor of the Ta-tsing (the Mandsu) dynasty.

The inscription gives many details in describing the case taken by the learned Jews to revise, restore and transcribe the sacred books, and mentions the names of seven families who chiefly occupied themselves with the task, and provided the largest part of the necesssary funds. It relates

also that from all the Thorah-rolls which were rescued from the floods in a damaged condition only one could be made complete, and they put this one Thorah-roll, with great devotion, in a shrine purposely constructed for it. In the same shrine they also put, with no less veneration, twelve more Thorah-rolls which they succeeded to acquire with great efforts. A centre was created once more, and the Jews gathered around it and united themselves, forming a new congregation.

Before Tsao-ying-tseng left the town he noted down in a book all the particulars of the said incidents, and his brother Ying-te edited a book of ten chapters recording in it all the above-mentioned events. He records that there were many Jewish Mandarins who helped in every direction to bring about the re-erection of the synagogue, and to put up the memorial stone for imparting all these occurrences to the later generations. This inscription has been engraved in the second year of Emperor Kang-hi of the Ta-tsing (Mandsu) dynasty (1663 C,E.).

* * *

When we carefully examine the inscriptions above produced, it cannot escape our attention that the composers of them were animated by quite a different spirit, and the inferences will lead us to the conclusion that in the 500 years which passed between 1164 to 1663 the process of absorption has gradually worked upon the Jews in China till they were doomed completely.

The inscription of 1164 distinguishes itself by very proud and haughty phrases, accentuating the superiority of the Jews, over those who "worship idols and images as gods" as they "pray in vain to inane phantoms, but those who esteem and follow the scriptures know the origin of everything," from which it is obvious that the Jews had taken umbrage at the religions of China, resenting their monotheism as not being pure, because of the images they adored. Not such a spirit prevails in the inscriptions which were composed three hundred years after. The tone of the inscriptions of 1488 and 1511 is quite a different one, as the Jews, certainly have then been to a great degree absorbed by the Chinese, and so they were contented to defend their position by extolling their religion as a true and

pure one, to praise their patriarchs and lawgivers, but they did not offend or attack the Chinese religions. There is no more an allusion to idolatory of other creeds, moreover we see that they had already adopted from the Chinese some customs of piety and ceremonies, being ignorant of the fact that they were in disharmony with Jewish religious precepts, e g the sacrifices to dead ancestors, the burning of incense in the Temple, and above all the references constantly made to the Yih-king and other sacred books of the Chinese, and as a corollary to it the translation of "Jahveh" by "Tao" (according to Alexei Winogradoff).

Some 150 years later, when the absorption was nearly completed, and there was no hope left, they did not struggle any more, they resigned and sought only to vindicate their deeds in the inscription of 1663 which they left behind them, wording it to the effect, that the Jewish and Chinese religions did not contradict each other, but were at one, in all and everything. The drift of this last inscription is rather of a defending character, aiming to palliate the assimilation, and to soften the accomplished fact of having been merged into the Chinese nation.

* * *

Before declaring my opinion on the circumstances which decided the fate of the Jews in China, I have to premise that all the Jewish settlements were undubitably situated in the provinces bordering on the Yellow River, that most destructive stream on the face of the earth, which has been named the "Sorrow of China," and that the Yellow River has repeatedly devastated the land by overflowing and made havoc in the settlements of the Jews. When such a disaster befell the inhabitants of the shores, some of the well-to-do Jews emigrated to other provinces, and to them the record on the memorial stone of 1511 refers, saying "Those who practice this religion are to be found in other places besides Pen." The emigrants, few in number as they were, and being scattered over different provinces away from their co-religionists, have soon been isolated, and when absorbed by the Chinese left no trace at all.

* * *

Two forces combined worked simultaneously towards the doom of the Jews in China, one of them being of a physical character, and the other of a purely spiritual one. By the physical force I mean the overwhelming majority of the native people, which, in case of being not of a lower

cultural standing than the alien minority, and if in intercourse with the foreigner treats him kindly, not making him feel to be a stranger, must in course of time, by quite a natural process grind the minority, crumble off parts of them and gradually absorb them. This normal process, which acted upon the Jews in China has been considerably accelerated by inundations and revolutions which time after time decimated them and lessened their power of resistance. By the spiritual force I understand the high ethical and philosophical standing of the religions of China at that time, which—as I have already mentioned in Part I.—caused the Jews to abdicate their superiority, to take up Chinese learning, and to assimilate to and mingle with the dominant majority.

* * *

The decline of the Jewish nation had commenced when the kingdom of Israel was subverted by Shalmaneser, and the ten—now lost—tribes were banished at Assyria and Media (721 B.C.E.) But still the kingdom of Judah existed, although tributary to the King of Assyria (II Kings 18. 14-16) and was so powerless and few in number that the Prophet Isaiah designated them as

"a remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah" (II Kings 19. 30). They must have been so few and so dreadfully incapacious to be even unfit to be a physical medium for consummating a miracle through them; the Jews were no more considered apt enough to meet the Assyrian army on the battlefield, to combat and vanquish it, but an Angel of the Lord had to come and smite it (II Kings 19. 35) yet they were still a nation settled on their own land with a King of their own brethren reigning over them.

But it was quite natural that this weak nation surrounded by enemies should fall, and the second deciding blow hit them by the destruction of the first Temple by Nebuchadnezzar (588 B.C.E.) when the Jews were exiled at Babylon. Since that time the Jews have no more recovered, they never recuperated vitality enough to rise and consolidate into a great nation. The return of the Jews to Jerusalem at the time of Zerubbabel and Ezra (531 and 458 B,C.E. resp.) and the organised commonwealth was only a faint reflex of the glory which had passed away not to return.

But although during the long time of the existence of the commonwealth, when the Jewish land had been a bone of contest for many kings thirsting for conquest, the Jews were hindered from regaining their secular independeucy and from

rising and elevating spiritually, *) still they were concentrated on their territory and could be called a nation. They did not despair, they even revived occasionally and inspired some selected plucky individuals and produced even heroes, such as the Maccabeans have been.

The Jews being under the sway of Roman procurators and besides it harassed by constant domestic intrigues and quarrels for gaining profitable and influential positions, debased constantly, and simony and nepotism was rife and rampant, so much so that even the rank and office of the High-priest became a negotiable object, and was often purchased by rich and powerful ignorant villains. In everything it went from bad

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*) משמתו נביאים הראשונים בטלו אורים וטומים (סוטה מ"ח א') After the demise of the first Prophets the Urim W'thumim have ceased to work.

משמתו נביאים האחרונים, הגי זכריה ומלאכי, נסתלקה רוח הקדש מישראל (כנהדרין י"א א.)

After the death of the last Prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, the Holy Spirit of prophecy has departed from the Jews.

אלו חמשה דברים שהיו בין מקדש ראשון למקדש שני ואלו הן:
ארון וכפורת וכרובים, אש, ושכינה, ורוח הקדש, ואורים ותומים (יומא כ"א ב.)

Among the five preferences which the first Temple has had over the second, there are mentioned "the Holy Ghost of God, the Holy Spirit of prophecy and the Urim W'thumim.

to worse, and especially after the death of Herodes, who, when wielding the power invested upon him, was strong and ambitious enough to maintain his prestige. The condition became unbearable and untenable, both through the exhorbitant extortions of the rapacious and venal Roman functionaries and by the Jewish domineering oppressors; the people revolted repeatedly and the unavoidable consequence was the total suppression of the revolution, and the destruction of the Temple, the annihilation of the commonwealth and the diaspora.

This was the end of the Jewish nation! The insurrections attempted afterwards are not worth mentioning, as they were only convulsions of a dying body.

* * *

The Jews have then been dispersed all over the world, and since that time they have been constantly under the same twofold influence which worked upon the off-shoots of those of our brethren who took refuge in China, and on whom this influence turned out to be so strong as to cause the withering of that branch of our nation. The Jews were now everywhere a small minority, and came face to face with alien cultures.

Though I have already expressed in Part I my opinion, why the Chinese succeeded in absorbing the Jews, whereas neither the Christians nor the Mohammedans can boast of such a result, yet I consider it as essential to treat the question more fully, with the special view to make use of the inferences which we may draw from investigating more closely into the causes, which brought about the success of the first-mentioned country and the failure of the others.

In analysing the accessory circumstances of that enigma of the unlike results, we will soon detect many discriminating points, proving that only superficially the causes seem to be homogenous, but not similar in intrinsical worthiness. It is true that in both cases, in the diaspora as in China, the Jews have been a small minority, among a great majority of the dominant natives, and even their numbers have been diminished in Christian and Mohammedan countries by persecutions and molestations as in China by inundations and revolutions. It is also true that the Jews came into the diaspora under the influence of alien cultures as it was the case in China. But the main difference lies therein, that whereas in China the dominant majority attracted the immigrated Jews by amicably approaching them, had the persecutions and oppressions developed

strong repulsive feelings among the Jews, and so the influence which the majority should have had on the minority was paralysed, and the Jewish minority took up a strong defending attitude and fortified their positions. It is obvious that the diminution of the Jewish population which had accelerated the absorption of the Jews in China, had produced the quite contrary result in the diaspora. The second influence, the spiritual one had been still more invalid, because at that time the culture in general was based solely on theological knowledge of a pugnacious tendency, and as the weapons of both combating parties, of the Christians or Mohammedans and of the Jews had to be borrowed mostly from the Jewish arsenal, the holy scriptures, on which they all relied, the Jews felt themselves stronger and superior to their combatants and remained invulnerable and impregnable. Not so has been the case in China, where the dominant nation had their own sacred writings which had not the slightest reference to the Jewish scriptures, and the Chinese did not assault the Jewish religion, but made their genuine culture work smoothly, gently and slowly upon the Jews; they did not fight the Jews but attracted them till they found themselves unawares transformed into Chinese.

The Jewish nation is at the present time once

more in a very critical position, and the influences of the decomposing forces are now, more than ever, menacing to destroy them, and more dangerous because of the altered intrinsic value of the forces which are busy to exterminate them.

The times, when the cultural weapons against the Jews were solely theological ones, are gone for ever, the religions are not considered any more to be the fountains of learning and knowledge, not even is it now regarded as an object of great importance—it has become a quantite negligeable. Nation after nation strives to check the influence of religion by separating state and church, and by excluding religion from the schools. The dignity and influence of religion in bygone times will be inherited by science which will occupy the foremost place in the ethical and spiritual world, and in cases of contradiction between the teachings of science and the teachings of the scriptures nobody will exert any more to force harmonious meanings into them, but ignore the scriptural teachings and take the teachings of science as indisputable truths.

On this battlefield, the battlefield of science, the Jews not only have never been at the fore but have always had to borrow from the Gentiles, hence the danger that the Jews will nolens volens have to give in and become assimilated. We

cannot gainsay the fact that all our prominent men of practical and scientific standing have been brought up on secular education, which has nothing to do with Jewish learning, and the culture with which they were imbued has already worked upon them so much as to estrange from us a great many of our best intellectual men, of whom a certain percentage even abandoned us altogether and merged into the majority.

At the present critical and most perilous juncture a reaction has set in, and we are witnesses of a strong movement towards resurrection, which has attracted and revived not only the great masses, who are destined to provide for the rank and file of the combatants and of the restorers of the nation, but even many of those who were since long staying aside from their brethren, have given testimony of their readiness to return to their nation, to unite with those whom they have forsaken, and have declared to share their lot, and to assist them as far as it will be in their power.

We must confess that the initiative to the movement did not come from a spontaneous impulse of the Jews themselves, but was called forth by accidents from without; it was the outcry of the suffering Jews which awakened the slumbering consciences, e.g. the terrible injustice which

was committed by France in 1894 against the innocent Captain Dreyfus, the vehicle to bring back to his brethren the half and half assimilated Dr. Theodor Herzl, who, in his capacity as correspondent for the Neue Freie Presse was present at the degradation of Dreyfus. The horrible oppressions of the Jews in Roumania, the barbaric persecutions and pogroms of the Jews in Russia evoked the protests of the enlightened West, and stirred up all those Jews who were living in peace among cultured peoples and had forgotten their hapless brethren. But the fact that the movement has come through our enemies does not debase the regeneration which they brought about. Has not Moses himself been stimulated by the occurrence "that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens" (Exod.2.11), and does not Nehemiah record that he was spurned to act because Hanani related to him that "the remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach" (Nehemiah 1. 3)?

The movement is strenuously acting all over the world where Jews are living, all, or nearly all of them are animated with the stern desire to bring deliverance to the nation, and to erect once more the house of Israel. And I do not hesitate to aver that—should our people act in

perfect harmony, all aiming at one goal—we would, without the slightest doubt, succeed, and our endeavours would be brought to perfection to our satisfaction. And when we will succeed so far as to get a territory on autonomic principles granted and guaranteed by one of the enlightened great powers, we could—there is no doubt of it—develop into a vital and prosperous nation to the profit of ourselves and of the great power, to the suzerainity of which we will always be faithful vassals. I even contend that the conditions for success are more favourable at the present time than even at the time of Zerubbabel and Ezra, when the Jews returned to Jerusalem by the grace of the Kings of Persia. The political conditions of the world are in general more stable and more regulated than they have been some 2500 years ago.

That our nation, in case that all forces should unite together could command an abundance of talented men, sufficient to provide every governmental department with a strenuous staff of officers, nobody will gainsay. Only we must not split our strength on problems of no importance e.g. we ought not to lay stress on things of a minor value like the question: in which particular part of the world the territory of refuge *must* be situated, in Asia, Africa or America, as if it make

an essential difference on which geographical spot of the globe it will be, as if it were not sufficient when the territory will be of a healthy climate, and of a fertile soil, and all other economical conditions will be favourable to the settlement of a nation. The main thing, as a *conditio sine qua non* is that all of us shall work in harmony without taking the slightest private interest in consideration.

We will also have to pay due attention to the requirements of the spirit of the age. It is self-evident that it would not do to make use of such like means for instance as those applied by Nehemiah, who records "And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, "Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves" (Nehemiah 13.25) In our time, I dare say, other persuasive means would be more suitable and more effective. And certainly there would be a strong opposition, and it would provoke quarrels and hatred, should we decide to take the deeds of Ezra and Nehemiah as samples and act accordingly. I refer to the command to turn out, both, the wives they had married long before and their children they bore them, as it is written in Ezra chap. 10, or to

drive away the son of the high priest because he happened to be the son-in-law of Sanballat (Nehemiah 13. 28). Such like vigorous means certainly would cause a rupture of the nation, and bring about the exodus of the more tolerant and liberal Jews from the rank and file of the nation.

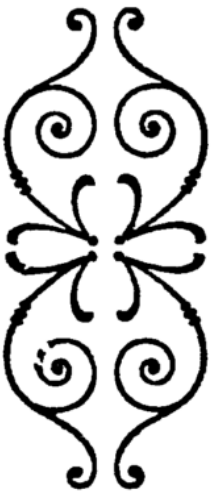
The only straight way for our nation is to acquire a territory to concentrate the bulk of the nation there, which will form the dominant majority of the country. Such a country will become a place where genuine Jewish culture, and the cultures of other nations will influence each other and fuse together, and the composition would give birth to new culture, the shape of which it is impossible to define yet. But surely this new culture, which will contain a certain portion of Jewish culture, although many parts of its contents will be gleaned from the cultures of other nations, will be entitled to name itself "Jewish culture" because of having been developed by the Jewish nation in the Jewish territory Of the profits it will gain from the foreign ethics, we may say, applying the words of the Talmudists (מגילה מ') "יפאתו של יפת באהלי שם" "Those excellent learnings of Japhet will be taught in the tents of Shem" I understand it to mean at the time when the Jews will possess *their own tents, their own homes, in their own land.*

We must be candid and not bring ourselves into a state of hypnosis by auto suggestions, and it is of no avail to deny the historical facts, that whensoever a minority comes under the strong influence of a cultured majority, and if the majority does not repulse the minority, the majority absorbs it. We need not look for testimonies into the histories of other nations, as we ourselves have had enough experiences: we have seen that the Jews have nearly been absorbed in free countries like Italy and France, we have seen that the Jews have become totally extinct in China; we must not be blind to the fact that the repressive measures in Russia and Roumania, and the sham emancipation in Germany and Austria, was the only pressing power from without to keep the Jews together and unite them, in order to defend themselves as much as possible. And therefore the danger is not imminent in those countries where the hostility to the Jews is still strong and effective, because they will fight there and conserve themselves. But we have to look forward, to the time which must come sooner or later, to the time when the Jews will enjoy the same privileges as the dominant people, as the Germans, the Roumanians and the Russians, Then the process of grinding and annihilating of the minority will commence all over the world and

work rapidly, because there will be heard no more groans of any oppressed to remind the Jews that they were once a strong nation, and are about to be destroyed from the face of the earth. Therefore we have to look out for means to prevent the process of absorption, and *the only remedy is, as I have said, a territory for the Jews.*

Let us not lull our conscience, and deceive ourselves with empty phantoms, e.g. such as that the numerous Jewish immigrants in America will restore and consolidate the Jews as a nation; to comfort us with such-like hopes is self-delusion, because it is contrary to the laws of natural development. The revival called forth by the numerous Jewish immigrants in America will be only a temporary one, and the shortsighted optimists alone may rejoice at such a regeneration and be satisfied with it. The Jewish immigrants could restore the nation if they were all in one state of the United States, forming there a majority, but being in the cities and commercial centres they will be able only to check the process of absorption for some time, say for a hundred or two hundred years, but will not be strong enough to paralyze it for ever. There is no more a possibility of retaining a scattered minority to form a compact nation, as it is

unthinkable to rely exclusively on crops nursed in hothouses for steadily providing food for the population of a whole country. We have seen that the process of absorption of the Jews in China has taken five hundred years, a long time it was, still they have finally been swallowed up by the Chinese; and some hundred or two hundred years are a short time for an old nation as we are.

So long the Jews will be scattered among a majority with a scientific culture—and it will not be a long time till all nations will have scientific cultures—the majority must by degrees increase their influence and become the absolute masters of the intellects of all, and the Jews must and will merge into it.

I will conclude by repeating once more that we need a territory, and to acquire it we need a harmonious action of all our forces, the intellectual and physical combined. But it is not an easy task to complete such an achievement, and it requires a strong organisation and a brisk propaganda, to awaken the interest of the influential men among us. I dare not make proposals how to bring about the organisation and the propaganda, and I will not obtrude myself as an uncalled for adviser, moreover this book is not the proper place for it.